

BEAVERTON TRAFFIC COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
AUGUST 1, 2013

APPROVED

CALL TO ORDER and ROLL CALL

Chairman Conway called the Traffic Commission meeting to order in the Forrest C. Soth City Council Chamber, 4755 SW Griffith Drive, Beaverton, Oregon, on Thursday, August 1, 2013 at 7:05 pm and called the roll.

Traffic Commissioners present included Ernie Conway, Paul Cohen, John Herring, Bill Berg, and Brad McClean.

City of Beaverton staff included City Transportation Engineer, Jabra Khasho, Police Traffic Sergeant Steve Schaer and Traffic Commission Recorder, Teri Cunningham.

VISITORS

No one from the audience came forward to speak.

STAFF COMMENTS

Mr. Khasho said that the City received additional written testimony after the packets were mailed, so there were six additional written testimonies to review on TC 709.

CONSENT

Chairman Conway reviewed the consent agenda comprised of the June 6, 2013, draft meeting minutes. There were no changes to the minutes.

Commissioner McClean MOVED, SECONDED by Commissioner Berg to approve the June 6, 2013, meeting minutes as written.

Question called on the motion. Commissioners Berg, Cohen, Conway, McClean and Herring voted AYE. The MOTION CARRIED (5:0)

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Issue TC 709: Parking Restrictions on SW 152nd Avenue between Teal Boulevard and Heron Court

Chairman Conway opened the public hearing regarding TC 709.

Staff Report

Mr. Khasho said that the request was from Mr. Bob Mazer of Beaverton. Mr. Mazer requested that the Traffic Commission review parking on 152nd between Teal Boulevard and Heron Court. Mr. Mazer indicated that residents and visitors of the Andover Apartments park their cars on 152nd and sometimes cars are left overnight. He indicated that when cars are parked on the street it forces drivers coming down the hill to abruptly apply their brakes to avoid hitting the parked cars because of the limited sight distance as you go down the hill. Mr. Mazer is concerned about the safety of drivers and residents in that area.

Mr. Khasho said that the width of the pavement on 152nd is 32 feet and it is classified as a local street. He said that a traffic count done in July of this year showed the street carries approximately 1,022 vehicles per day and during the most three recent years of available crash data, there are no reported crashes on 152nd. Mr. Khasho said that under current standards of the Engineering Design Manual, the pavement width must be at least 28 feet to allow parking on both sides if traffic on the street is less than 500 vehicles per day and it must be 34 feet wide to allow parking on both sides if traffic is over 500 vehicles per day. He said based on these standards, 152nd is short by two feet to allow parking on both sides of the street.

Mr. Khasho said that if we restrict parking on one side of the street, there would be adequate width to allow two-way traffic and parking on a single side without drivers encroaching onto oncoming traffic and it would keep the path for traffic traveling downhill clear. Mr. Khasho said staff is proposing restricted parking on the west side of the street between Teal Boulevard and Heron Court and is asking that the Commission to approve the staff recommendation.

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Public Testimony

Mike Jubinville, Beaverton. Mr. Jubinville emphasized that there are two points he'd like to make sure are taken into consideration – the first is that the time of the traffic count being in July when school is not in session. He said that he'd lived on Heron Circle for over twenty years and a major concern is the safety of children and what goes on during the school year in this area.

He said that as you come down Heron Circle, the hill is very steep and most neighbors avoid the street because you can't navigate well coming down the road. He also pointed out that the corner is designated as a school bus stop and it's a full size school bus that stops there and makes a turn and goes up the hill. He said traffic coming down many times in the morning has to stop up higher on the hill because when the bus loads students it has to swing out into the opposing lane. He mentioned that the traffic issues are further complicated because there's also a designated Tri-Met bus stop, and when the Tri-Met bus is loading, the bus driver stops leaving the tail end of the bus hanging out on the street, so navigating in either direction becomes very difficult.

Mr. Jubinville said it seems that 152nd has become more of an arterial street between Weir and Teal because a lot of people come down through the neighborhood to access shopping and gas at the Safeway and other shops there. He said that in the 20 years he's lived there, the volume of the traffic has really increased. He said that limiting the parking would help to allow that the buses to have adequate time to make the turn and drivers are not stuck in the corner when they are stopping.

Commissioner McClean asked Mr. Jubinville if he believes that restricting parking on the west side of 152nd will remedy his concerns or if he feels there should be more restrictions or changes made.

Mr. Jubinville reiterated that he's lived there for 20 years and that he feels he has a good grasp of where the cars are coming from and what causes the problems in that area. He said that the Andover Apartments added garages and they now rent garages instead of providing parking and folks not wanting to pay for parking are being pushed as overflow onto the neighboring streets. He said that it used to be the next street over that was being filled up quickly, but that's been restricted, so even if parking is restricted on 152nd, there is going to be a parking overflow issue somewhere because the cars from Andover Apartments are still going to need to park somewhere. He said that this solution will only mitigate the issue on 152nd until the next time the traffic creeps.

Vice Chair Herring said he wanted to ask Mr. Jubinville a question as the former president of the Murrayhill HOA to ensure that everyone was talking about the same apartment complex.

Mr. Jubinville indicated that he was thinking of the complex above the daycare center but not necessarily the one across Teal, but folks from the audience indicated that both cause overflow parking on adjacent streets.

Chairman Conway said that one comment indicated that 152nd had become an annex parking lot. He asked Mr. Jubinville if as the former president of the Murrayhill HOA, had there been any discussion to address the issue on a resident level versus on a City level.

Mr. Jubinville said that he's no longer the president of the Homeowners Association, but when he was president, they had approved the garages without realizing the overflow parking would become such an issue because they had thought the apartment complex would still provide parking without charging for it.

Commissioner Cohen asked Mr. Jubinville if the proposal to limit the parking on the west side of the street would satisfy what he and the other neighbors had requested.

Mr. Jubinville indicated that he feels limited parking on the west side of the street would not be enough, and that at a minimum, he'd also recommend a large setback from the corners to allow better visibility for turning and for folks needing to see what's there.

Commissioner Berg asked if people typically park close to the intersection of Teal.

Mr. Jubinville said yes, and that that it's kind of a transit neighborhood because of the apartments, and that there was a time for about a year and a half that a full size panel truck would park on the street late at night.

Chairman Conway asked Mr. Khasho to define where the parking should actually stop on the east side of the street with the fire hydrant there.

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Mr. Khasho said that legally you cannot park within 20 feet of an intersection or 50 feet from a stop sign. So, at the corners, legally you cannot park there, but people do. He said that if neighbors are interested in restricting parking at the corners, it can be done without a hearing of the Traffic Commission. It can be done under the Traffic Engineer's authority, which would allow restriction of parking up to 50 feet.

Chairman Conway asked the total length of 152nd.

Mr. Khasho said he hadn't measured the length, but that he estimated it at approximately 500 feet.

Dennis Lynch, Beaverton. Mr. Lynch said that he was one of the first residents there and has lived there about 25 years and that he supports what Mr. Jubinville suggested but that he also has some other comments to make about the parking issues.

He said one issue is that it's a 35 mph zone on Teal and a lot of folks drive much faster than that and when you're in front of them making a right turn, you feel rushed to turn quickly. He said the map doesn't illustrate that it's a blind turn, you aren't turning at a complete right angle, you are almost turning back, and it becomes very difficult to turn because your ability to swing out is restricted. Mr. Lynch said the other big issue is that when you come out of Heron Circle, the hill is very steep and if there's not a car parked there, it's very difficult to see a car coming up the hill. He said you'll often just see a car coming up as you are turning out because the sight distance is limited due to the incline of the hill. He said that he feels there should be no parking at all on this street. He said that the parking issue has gotten really out of hand in the last two years and folks park right down to within just five feet of Teal Boulevard. He said that if parking is allowed even on one side, turning from the other way is still going to be difficult.

Chairman Conway asked if there had been any discussion amongst the neighbors about putting in a request for a four-way stop at 152nd and Heron given that there is another four-way stop further up the hill.

Mr. Lynch said that there was no request that he was aware of, and that a two-way stop is adequate if there aren't cars parked on the street.

Amy Edward, Beaverton. She said that she has been a resident there for fourteen years and that she has a teenager who has just started driving and because the street behind her house has become such a concern, she supports both Mr. Jubinville and Mr. Lynch in everything that they have said and that she would ask the Commission to consider restricting parking on both sides of the street instead of just on one side. She said that when they go out, it's too dangerous to turn left because the visibility is poor. She said she noticed that since the notice for the hearing was put up, there are fewer cars that have parked on the street. She said that when cars are parked on both sides of the street, it's too narrow to safely pass. She said when you come around the corner, if there are cars parked around the corner people tend to come down the hill in the middle of the road. She said that it's probably because of the limited visibility and if there's parking allowed on the east side of the street, it's going to still be difficult to navigate. As folks have stated, 152nd seems to have become a main thoroughfare.

Ms. Edward said that although there are no reported accidents, she knows of at least one being due to a car being parked and there being nowhere to go as he turned the corner. She said that she's also concerned about safety in winter weather when the street becomes very slick and with cars parked there it will become even more dangerous because there would be more hazards with cars parked there. She said the disturbance to the people who live there is also a concern. The parking has gotten out of hand, and people coming in and out between midnight and 4 am are usually loud and that extra garbage is generated with all of the extra folks trekking through the neighborhood.

Commissioner Berg asked if there are any parking restrictions on Heron Circle.

Ms. Edward said that there is no parking around the island, but that parking is not restricted in front of the houses. She said that the concern is that if the parking is restricted on 152nd, they might start parking in front of the homes on Heron. She said that she has seen folks coming from the complex on the south side of Teal.

Karen Gregory, Beaverton. She said that she agrees with everyone and that safety is her primary concern and any kind of mitigation would be helpful.

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Janet Williams, Beaverton. She said that to get in and out of her subdivision, the entrance onto Weir is even more frightening than the one onto Teal. She said that she and her husband have lived there for 20 years and they go through the neighborhood to the 24 Hour Fitness every morning as early as 6 am and there used to be no cars, but the parking has increased exponentially. She said that when the signs went up, there is no parking on the street, but she has observed that they are parking over by the bank and by the pond because the apartment south of Teal has a walkway that goes from their apartment to the pond, so there are other options for parking without them having to park on Teal and she'd strongly support restricting parking on both sides of the street instead of just one.

Chairman Conway asked if Ms. Williams is aware of any discussion going on between either the apartment complex staff or the residents around 152nd and nearby businesses to discuss offering evening parking for those folks.

Ms. Williams said she didn't feel they'd have to because the sign posted says no parking during business hours, but there are no restrictions on evening parking and that is when the folks are parking on 152nd.

Chairman Conway asked if the City has ever closed the street due to safety concerns during inclement weather. He asked if folks just park at the bottom instead of going all the way up.

Ms. Williams said that she has kids who have ridden the school bus that goes down that way and they have had issues multiple times.

Chairman Conway asked what the resolution is for the neighbors on Herring Court when the weather is so bad they can't safely get down the hill.

Ms. Williams said they usually just stay home because there's not a safe way out of the neighborhood.

Mr. Khasho said the recommendation is to restrict parking on the entire length of the west side of the street. He also said that No Parking signs can be posted on the east side of the street for 25 feet from the intersection and that can be done without having to come back for Commission approval to do it.

Chairman Conway closed the public hearing portion for discussion on TC 709.

COMMISSION DELIBERATION

Commissioner Berg asked that because the street doesn't meet the minimum width for the number of traffic volume, isn't it required to limit parking on one side?

Mr. Khasho said that the street was built prior to the standards today were applicable. He said that the most current standards were in place 15 years ago and the street was built 25 years ago or thereabouts. He said that if we compare the standards when the street was constructed to present standards, we would only allow parking on one side versus both sides.

Commissioner Berg asked if the maximum length to restrict parking from the corner was 25 feet or 50 feet.

Mr. Khasho said that as the Traffic Engineer, he could do up to 50 feet, but that we'd have to review to determine if 50 feet was really necessary instead of 25 or 30 feet on that street. He mentioned that there still needs to be some overflow parking allowance for residents who have visitors that need parking.

Commissioner Conway asked if the width of the street necessitates a centerline.

Mr. Khasho said that typically centerlines are recommended when the volume of traffic is 6,000 vehicles per day or more on the street.

Commissioner Cohen asked if there was a reason for choosing to restrict the west side instead of the east side of the street.

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Mr. Khasho said that the reason the west side of the street was chosen was because of the sight distance and because the stop sign is on that side. He said it will also maintain more on- street parking for residents.

Commissioner McClean said that based on the Traffic Engineer's recommendation and written testimony, he supports restricting parking on one side of the street and at the corners.

Commissioner Berg agreed and said that he felt it's a reasonable compromise and that adding setbacks from the corners would help to improve safety.

Commissioner Cohen said that when he visited the site, there were no cars parked, but that there were cars coming down the center as some residents have mentioned. He said that he thinks this is an interim step and is a good place to start.

Vice Chair Herring said that he agrees with the other commissioners that restricting parking on one side and adding setbacks from the corner would solve the immediate problem of safety and that he felt the nuisance vehicles could be driven into the neighborhoods themselves if parking were restricted on both sides of the street.

Chairman Conway agreed with everyone and noted that the Commission has seen similar issues in the past and that we do not like to enforce no parking in more places because we have had more appeals from people who have felt no parking restrictions were too aggressive. There is a concern that if you restrict totally, folks just go somewhere else, which creates a problem for other people. He mentioned that he would encourage the community to get involved with discussions with local businesses on parking after hours. He said ultimately, he agrees with the staff recommendation.

Commissioner McClean MOVED, SECONDED by Commissioner Berg to approve the staff recommendation to restrict parking on the west side of 152nd Avenue between Teal boulevard and Heron Court and the final written order as written.

Question called on the motion. Commissioners Berg, Cohen, Conway, McClean and Herring voted AYE. The MOTION CARRIED (5:0)

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Khasho said that there would not be a meeting in September. He also said that Commissioner Conway & Commissioner Johnson's terms had reached the two year mark and they would be sent an e-mail regarding their terms.

ADJOURNMENT

The August 1, 2013 Traffic Commission meeting adjourned at 7:50 pm.

Teri Cunningham, Traffic Commission Recorder